



What's wrong
with renewable energy?

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Further reading:

The Party's Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Society by Richard Heinberg

Green Illusions: The Dirty Secrets of Clean Energy & the Future of Environmentalism by Ozzie Zehner

Greenwashing and You! A Short Primer On "Green" Capitalism & How To Move Toward True Sustainability by Ruin Doppëlganger
available @ yggdrasildistro.wordpress.com

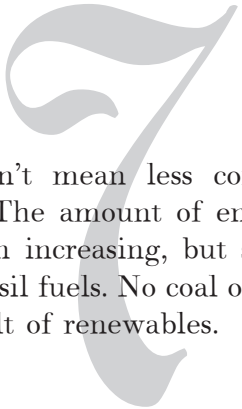
10
things environmentalists need to
know about renewable energy



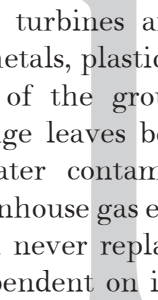
Fig. 1 – The act of Prometheus stealing the fire of the gods, as given in Pierio Valeriano's *'Hieroglyphica'* (Lyon, 1586).

Solar panels and wind turbines last around 20-30 years, then need to be replaced. The production process, of extracting, polluting, and exploiting, is not something that happens once, but is continuous and expanding.

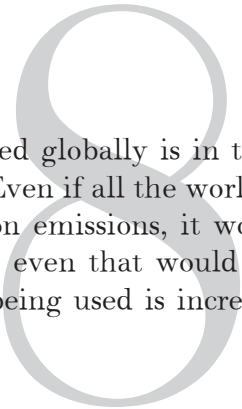
The emissions reductions that renewables intend to achieve could be easily accomplished by improving the efficiency of existing coal plants, at a much lower cost. This shows that the whole renewables industry is nothing but an exercise in profiteering with no benefits for anyone other than the investors.



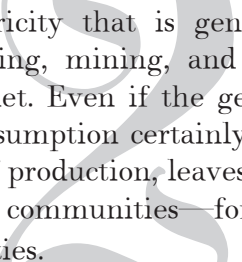
More renewables doesn't mean less conventional power, or less carbon emissions. The amount of energy being generated by renewables has been increasing, but so has the amount of energy generated by fossil fuels. No coal or gas plants have been taken off line as a result of renewables.



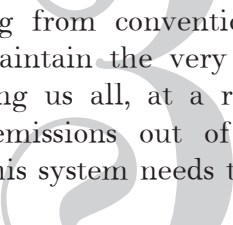
Solar panels and wind turbines aren't made out of nothing. They are made out of metals, plastics, chemicals. These products have been mined out of the ground, transported, processed, manufactured. Each stage leaves behind a trail of devastation: habitat destruction, water contamination, colonization, toxic waste, slave labour, greenhouse gas emissions, wars, and corporate profits. Renewables can never replace fossil fuel infrastructure, as they are entirely dependent on it for their existence.



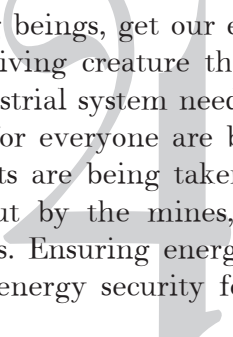
Only 20% of energy used globally is in the form of electricity. The rest is oil and gas. Even if all the world's electricity could be produced without carbon emissions, it would only reduce total emissions by 20%. And even that would have little impact, as the amount of energy being used is increasing exponentially.



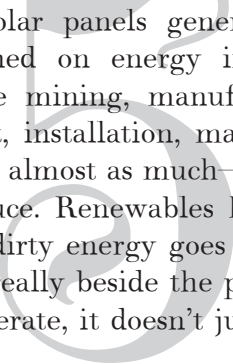
The majority of electricity that is generated by renewables is used in manufacturing, mining, and other industries that are destroying the planet. Even if the generation of electricity were harmless, the consumption certainly isn't. Every electrical device, in the process of production, leaves behind the same trail of devastation. Living communities—forests, rivers, oceans—become dead commodities.



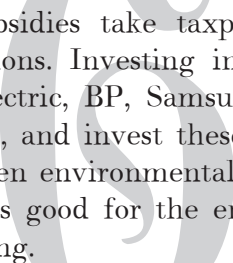
The aim of converting from conventional power generation to renewables is to maintain the very system that is killing the living world, killing us all, at a rate of 200 species per day. Taking carbon emissions out of the equation doesn't make it sustainable. This system needs to not be sustained, but stopped.



Humans, and all living beings, get our energy from plants and animals. There is no living creature that needs electricity for survival. Only the industrial system needs electricity to survive, and food and habitat for everyone are being sacrificed to feed it. Farmland and forests are being taken over, not just by the infrastructure itself, but by the mines, processing and waste dumping that it entails. Ensuring energy security for industry requires undermining energy security for living beings (that's us).



Wind turbines and solar panels generate little, if any, net energy (energy returned on energy invested). The amount of energy used in the mining, manufacturing, research and development, transport, installation, maintenance and disposal of these technologies is almost as much—or in some cases more than—they ever produce. Renewables have been described as a laundering scheme: dirty energy goes in, clean energy comes out. (Although this is really beside the point, as no matter how much energy they generate, it doesn't justify the destruction of the living world.)



Renewable energy subsidies take taxpayer money and give it directly to corporations. Investing in renewables is highly profitable. General Electric, BP, Samsung, and Mitsubishi all profit from renewables, and invest these profits in their other business activities. When environmentalists accept the word of corporations on what is good for the environment, something has gone seriously wrong.